

His Majesty's
MOST GRACIOUS
S P E E C H
TO BOTH HOUSES OF
P A R L I A M E N T,

On Thursday, December 5, 1782.



L O N D O N:

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His MAJESTY's most GRACIOUS SPEECH to both HOUSES of PARLIAMENT,

On Thursday, December 5, 1782.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,



INCE the Close of the last Sessions, I have employed My whole Time in the Care and Attention which the important and critical Conjuncture of publick Affairs required of Me.

I LOST no Time in giving the necessary Orders to prohibit the further Prosecution of offensive War upon the Continent of *North America*. Adopting, as My Inclination will always lead Me to do, with Decision and Effect, whatever I collect to be the Sense of My Parliament and My People; I have pointed all My Views and Measures, as well in *Europe* as in *North America*, to an entire and cordial Reconciliation with those Colonies.

FINDING it indispensible to the Attainment of this Object, I did not hesitate to go the full Length of the Powers vested in Me, and offered to declare them Free and Independent States, by an Article to be inserted in the Treaty of Peace. Provisional Articles are agreed upon, to take effect whenever Terms of Peace shall be finally settled with the Court of *France*.

IN thus admitting their Separation from the Crown of these Kingdoms, I haye sacrificed every Consideration of My own, to the Wishes and Opinion of My People. I make it My humble and earnest Prayer to Almighty God, that *Great Britain* may not feel the Evils which might result from so great a Dismemberment of the Empire; and, that *America* may be free from those Calamities, which have formerly proved in the Mother Country how essential Monarchy is to the Enjoyment of Constitutional Liberty.—Religion—Language—Interest—Affections may, and I hope will yet prove a Bond of permanent Union between the Two Countries: To this End, neither Attention nor Disposition shall be wanting on My Part.

WHILE I have carefully abstained from all offensive Operations against *America*, I have directed My whole Force by Land and Sea against the other Powers at War, with as much Vigour, as the Situation of that Force, at the Commencement of the Campaign, would permit. I trust that you feel the Advantages resulting from the Safety of the great Branches of Our Trade. You must have seen with Pride and Satisfaction the gallant Defence of the Governor and the Garrison of *Gibraltar*; and My Fleet, after having effected the Object of their Destination, offering Battle to the combined Force of *France* and *Spain* on their own Coasts; those of My Kingdoms have remained at the same Time perfectly secure, and your domestic Tranquillity uninterrupted. This respectable State, under the Blessing of God, I attribute to the entire Confidence which subsists between Me and My People, and to the Readiness which has been shewn by My Subjects in My City of *London*, and in other Parts of My Kingdoms, to stand forth in the general Defence. Some Proofs have lately been given of public Spirit in private Men, which would do Honour to any Age, and any Country.

HAVING manifested to the whole World, by the most lasting Examples, the signal Spirit and Bravery of My People; I conceived it a Moment not unbecoming My Dignity, and thought it a Regard due to the Lives and Fortunes of such brave and gallant Subjects, to shew Myself ready on My Part, to embrace fair and honourable Terms of Accommodation with all the Powers at War.

I HAVE the Satisfaction to acquaint you, that Negotiations to this Effect are considerably advanced, the Result of which, as soon as they are brought to a Conclusion, shall be immediately communicated to you.

I HAVE every Reason to hope and believe, that I shall have it in my Power in a very short Time to acquaint you, that they have ended in Terms of Pacification, which, I trust, you will see just Cause to approve.—I rely however with perfect Confidence on the Wisdom of My Parliament, and the Spirit of My People, that if any unforeseen Change in the Dispositions of the Belligerent Powers should frustrate My confident Expectations, they will approve of the Preparations I have thought it adviseable to make, and be ready to second the most vigorous Efforts in the further Prosecution of the War.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I HAVE endeavoured by every Measure in my Power to diminish the Burthens of My People.—I lost no Time in taking the most decided Measures for introducing a better Oeconomy into the Expenditure of the Army.

I HAVE carried into strict Execution the several Reductions in My Civil List Expences, directed by an Act of the last Sessions.—I have introduced a further Reform into other Départments, and suppressed several Sine Cure Places in them. I have by this Means so regulated My Establishments, that My Expence shall not in future exceed My Income.

I HAVE ordered the Estimate of the Civil List Debt, laid before you last Sessions, to be completed. The Debt proving somewhat greater than could be then correctly stated, and the proposed Reduction not immediately taking place, I trust you will provide for the Deficiency, securing, as before, the Repayment out of My annual Income.

I HAVE ordered Enquiry to be made into the Application of the Sum voted in Support of the *American* Sufferers; and I trust that you will agree with Me, that a due and generous Attention ought to be shewn to those who have relinquished their Properties or Professions from Motives of Loyalty to Me, or Attachment to the Mother Country.

As it may be necessary to give Stability to some Regulations by Act of Parliament, I have ordered Accounts of the several Establishments, incidental Expences, Fees and other Emoluments of Office, to be laid before you. Regulations have already taken place in some, which it is my Intention to extend to all, and which, besides expediting all public Business, must produce a very considerable Saving, without taking from that ample Encouragement, which ought to be held forth to Talents, Diligence, and Integrity, wherever they are to be found.

I HAVE directed an Enquiry to be made into whatever regards the landed Revenue of My Crown, as well as the Management of My Woods and Forests, that both may be made as beneficial as possible, and that the latter may furnish a certain Resource for supplying the Navy, Our great national Bulwark, with its first Material.

I HAVE directed an Investigation into the Department of the Mint, that the Purity of the Coin, of so much Importance to Commerce, may be always adhered

adhered to; that by rendering the Difficulty of counterfeiting greater, the Lives of Numbers may be saved, and every needless Expence in it suppressed.

I must recommend to you an immediate Attention to the great Objects of the Public Receipts and Expenditure; and above all, to the State of the Public Debt.—Notwithstanding the great Increase of it during the War, it is to be hoped that such Regulations may still be established—such Savings made—and future Loans so conducted, as to promote the Means of its gradual Redemption by a fixed Course of Payment.—I must, with particular Earnestness, distinguish for your serious Consideration, that Part of the Debt which consists of Navy, Ordnance, and Victualling Bills: the enormous Discount upon some of these Bills shews this Mode of Payment to be a most ruinous Expedient.

I HAVE ordered the several Estimates, made up as correctly as the present Practice would admit, to be laid before you. I hope that such further Corrections as may be necessary, will be made before the next Year. It is My Desire, that you should be apprized of every Expence before it is incurred, as far as the Nature of each Service can possibly admit.—Matters of Account can never be made too public.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

THE Scarcity, and consequent high Price of Corn, requires your instant Interposition.

THE great Excess to which the Crimes of Theft and Robbery, in many Instances accompanied with personal Violence, particularly in the Neighbourhood of this Metropolis, has called of late for a strict and severe Execution of the Laws. It were much to be wished that these Crimes could be prevented in their Infancy, by correcting the Vices become prevalent in a most alarming Degree.

THE liberal Principles adopted by you concerning the Rights and the Commerce of *Ireland*, have done you the highest Honour, and will, I trust, increase that Harmony, which ought always to subsist between the Two Kingdoms. I am persuaded that a general Increase of Commerce throughout the Empire, will prove the Wisdom of your Measures with regard to that Object. I would recommend to you a Revision of Our whole Trading System upon the same comprehensive Principles, with a view to its utmost possible Extension.

THE Regulation of a vast Territory in *Asia*, opens a large Field for your Wisdom, Prudence, and Foresight. I trust that you will be able to frame some fundamental Laws, which may make their Connection with *Great Britain* a Blessing to *India*; and that you will take therein proper Measures to give all Foreign Nations, in Matters of Foreign Commerce, an entire and perfect Confidence in the Probity, Punctuality, and good Order of Our Government. You may be assured that whatever depends upon Me, shall be executed with a Steadiness, which can alone preserve that Part of My Dominions, or the Commerce which arises from it.

IT is the fixed Object of My Heart to make the general Good, and the true Spirit of the Constitution, the invariable Rule of My Conduct, and on all Occasions to advance and reward Merit in every Profession.

To ensure the full Advantage of a Government conducted on such Principles, depends on your Temper, your Wisdom, your Disinterestedness, collectively and individually.

My People expect these Qualifications of you: and I call for them,